

From: "Luck, Holly (Baucus)"
To: "Shannon Marinko", <LandUseRuleComments@do.usbr.gov>
Date: 10/12/07 9:25AM
Subject: RE: Exclusive Use Policy

Thanks, Shannon. Max released this yesterday.

Washington, D.C.) Montana's senior U.S. Senator Max Baucus today urged Bureau of Reclamation Commissioner to allow current leaseholders and cabin owners to remain at Nelson and Canyon Ferry Reservoirs and to not follow through with plans to terminate leases when they expire.

In July, the BOR proposed changing the rule that would allow for terminating leases for cabins and trailers when the current existing leases expire. Baucus is against the proposed rule change and urged the BOR to listen to Montanans weighing issue. Baucus said that current leaseholders to keep their cabins and trailers and their current locations.

"Montanans have enjoyed these cabin sites for decades," wrote Baucus to BOR Commissioner Bob Johnson in a letter today. "Nelson Reservoir is one of the top walleye fisheries in the state. Like Canyon Ferry, it offers opportunities for boating and fishing. Montanans come from miles around to recreate with friends and family. Cabin and trailer sites on the shores of these reservoirs are critically important to many Montana families. The new Bureau of Reclamation rule, as proposed, would allow for the termination of leases for cabin and trailers upon expiration of the current existing lease. That possibility is unacceptable, and should be clarified to permit renewal of the leases, so that families can continue to enjoy the same recreational opportunities for years to come."

Baucus has fought a similar proposal in the past by the BOR to limit Montanans access to Canyon Ferry. Last year, Baucus fought a proposal by the BOR that would require campers to haul their trailers back and forth every time they wanted to camp. Baucus said he is adamantly against any proposal that would limit Montanans access to the state's outdoor heritage hunting, fishing, camping, boating, and hiking.

"Montanans are outdoors people," Baucus wrote. "We hunt and fish. We take our kids boating and camping. Public lands and sites such as the Nelson and Canyon Ferry Reservoirs are an important part of our recreational heritage. I strongly urge you to take into account that heritage as your agency works to finalize the proposed rule.... Should the final rule fail to protect the interests of Montanans, I will do everything in my power to stop it."

Baucus said he is committed to working together with the BOR on a common sense solution that will help ensure Montanans to have continued access to the recreation sites that they enjoy year round.